

Hacker-Kennedy House
400 W. Main Street
Jonesboro
Washington County
Tennessee

HABS No. TN-210

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90-Jonesboro
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HACKER-KENNEDY HOUSE

HABS No. TN-210

Location: 400 W. Main Street, Jonesboro, Washington County,
Tennessee.

Present Owners: Dr. and Mrs. William E. Kennedy.

Present Use: Residence.

Significance: The house is a good example of an 1860s regional adaption
of the Italinata Villa style residence.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Circa 1869.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a record of
subsequent ownerships of the house. The information is from the
Deed Books in the Washington County Courthouse.

1. Grantee: Newton Hacker
Grantor: Joseph S. Rhea et ux
Kind of Instrument: Warranty Deed
Recorded: Deed Book 41 at page 139
Date of Instrument: September 7, 1868
Date of Recording: September 7, 1868
Consideration: \$550.00

2. Grantee: Newton Hacker
Grantor: A.E. Jackson et ux
Kind of Instrument: Warranty Deed
Recorded: Deed Book 47 at page 96
Date of Instrument: June 27, 1879
Date of Recording: June 27, 1879

"A certain small lot of land....adjoining the lot of land on
which said Newton Hacker now lives..."
Consideration: \$152.37

3. Grantee: Florence Stuart and C.C. Hacker, Executor
Grantor: Newton Hacker
Kind of Instrument: Will
Recorded: Will Book 4 at page 445
Date of Instrument: September 14, 1920
Date of Probation: August 24, 1922

4. Grantee: Fred B. Stuart et ux Florence H. Stuart
Grantor: Florence Stuart and C.C. Hacker, Executor
Kind of Instrument: Warranty Deed
Recorded: Deed Book 158 at page 286
Date of Instrument: March 23, 1923
Date of Recording: March 23, 1923
 5. Grantee: Col. Theodore B. Hacker
Grantor: Fred B. Stuart ex ux Florence H. Stuart
Kind of Instrument: Warranty Deed
Recorded: Deed Book 186 at page 205
Date of Instrument: January 20, 1931
Date of Recording: January 20, 1931
 6. Grantee: Theodore B. Hacker et ux Harriet Hacker
Grantor: Col. Theodore B. Hacker
Kind of Instrument: Will
Recorded: Will Book 7 at page 315
Date of Instrument: October 27, 1954
Date of Probation: September 6, 1955
 7. Grantee: Dr. and Mrs. William E. Kennedy
Grantor: Theodore B. Hacker et ux Harriet Hacker
(Date of transaction not recorded)
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4. Original plans and construction: The exterior walls are of solid brick masonry three layers thick. The bricks were, according to tradition, made on the site from clay excavated for the basement and foundation. Floor joists and roof supports are of oak 2" x 12" on 14" centers. The floor joists are set directly into the brick wall instead of being placed on a sill. The ornament above the windows and doorways on the south (front) and east sides of the house are made of tin. The balustrades, porch columns, arches and brackets are all of wood. The original pressed tin roof is still in place and in excellent condition.
 5. Alterations and additions: During the ownership of the Stuarts, the original stairway, which was mounted on the west wall of the central hallway with the bottom step at the entrance to the parlor, was taken out and a revised stairway put in place as shown on the present plans. The new stairway is a more gentle climb and has the landing which the former stairway did not have. Word-of-mouth tradition indicates that the stairway was reversed in order to provide additional privacy for the upstairs, rear bedrooms and bath which was added at about the same time. An entrance from the main hallway into the dining room was closed off at the time the stairway was revised. During the same period, the large doorways or archways between the dining room and the parlor

were cut into the brick wall and opened. The entrance between the front hall and parlor was enlarged from that of a standard doorway to its present size as was also the entrance between the living room and the library.

During the last ownership of the Hackers, the back porch was enclosed though not altered. This included a partial closure of the kitchen window and the dining room window previously opening onto the back porch. The enclosure of the dining room window was completed by the Kennedys.

The three windows on the north wall of the kitchen are not original. It is not known when these windows were changed but from the style of the window it can be assumed to be in the 1920's.

The Kennedys in 1973 removed the rear stairs in order to gain more practical use of space in the small bedroom above the kitchen and in the kitchen. These stairs were so steep that they were also considered quite dangerous. Also in 1973 the Kennedys moved the original partition now representing the rear wall of the library back from its initial position quite close to the rear library window frame.

During the ownership of the Stuarts, oak flooring was placed on top of pine floors throughout the first floor and in the hallway of the second floor. The original pine floors are still in use in each of the bedrooms.

In 1896 and in 1900 the original owner, Newton Hacker, replaced the original mantles on the east chimney with the present oak mantles. At about the same time the fireplaces in the house were all converted from wood burning to coal burning. The present owners have restored the wood burning size. The floor mantles on the west chimney and all of the wood work in the house not directly connected with the above described alterations are original. The plaster throughout the house is also original except as repaired in connection with the above alterations. All of the exterior features of the house are original including the metal roof.

Architect for the renovation work in 1973 was William Starke Shell of Knoxville, Tennessee.

- B. Historical Context: Judge Newton Hacker, the builder, was a captain in the Union Army during the Civil War. His son, Colonel Hacker, was a career officer serving in Europe during World War I and was on General MacArthur's staff during World War II.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: In addition to its regional architectural character, the house is a typical example of a permanent home built at a time when the nation was predominantly frontier.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The two-story house measures approximately 48' x 55'. It has a irregular plan.
2. Foundations: Brick bearing walls on compacted earth. The exterior walls are approximately 16" thick. The interior walls are approximately 12" thick.
3. Walls: The same as mentioned above. The exterior brick walls are of Common bond with headers at approximately every eighth course. Bricks are smooth with a consistent soft red clay coloring.
4. Structural system, framing: Oak joists at the floors and ceilings which rest on brick bearing walls. The joists are 2" x 12" on 14" centers.
5. Porches: The house has front and rear porches. The front porch has a balustraded roof supported by handsome columns, and has ornamentation at the cornice area. The rear porch is similar, but the ornamentation is less elaborate.
6. Chimneys: Two brick chimneys which serve five fireplaces.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Most door openings are approximately three feet wide and seven feet high. These door openings have unusually heavy frames which jut approximately three inches past the wall surfaces.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Windows are approximately three feet wide and six feet high with flat heads at the first floor and a curved head for those at the second floor level. Sills are concrete. The two bay windows are approximately one half the width of the other windows throughout the house. They are topped with balustrades. Windows on the east and south (front) sides have ornamental tin molding at the head. There are no shutters.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The house has two intersecting gable roofs. The original tin roof is still in place and functional.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Cornices and eaves of the house are relatively simple and not bracketed. The most elaborate wood ornament is found at the cornices of the two bay windows.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The first floor contains an entry hall, stairway, parlor, living room, dining room, library, kitchen, toilet and enclosed rear porch. The latter serves as the rear entry point and the utility room. The second floor contains storage space, hall, stairway, three bedrooms, one bathroom and the master bedroom with its accompanying dressing room and bathroom.
2. Stairways: The main stairway is essentially in the center of the house. It has been altered somewhat and generally reflects the 1920s era of stairway detailing.

A winding, rear stair was formerly at the southeast corner of the kitchen, and it provided access to the second floor.
3. Flooring: Most areas on the first level have oak hardwood flooring over the original pine floor. On the second level the hallway has the new oak floor also, and the bedrooms still have the original pine floors.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The majority of the rooms have wallpaper on either the original plaster or on new plasterboard. Ceilings are plasterboard over the original plaster.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: (Not recorded).
 - b. Windows: (Not recorded).
6. Decorative features and trim: (Not recorded).
7. Hardware: Brass door knocker at the front door, glass door knobs, miscellaneous latches and locks.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: A new forced air system for heating and cooling has been included in the renovation of the house. The system features unusually small air delivery openings into the rooms

thus helping to maintain the 1860s character of the structure while heating and cooling it with contemporary methods.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces generally in the southern direction.
2. Outbuilding: Only one historic outbuilding (a small stable/barn) which has been removed.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Architectural drawings: Renovation drawings are in the office of William Starke Shell, Architect, 2501 Ailor Avenue, Knoxville, Tennessee.
- B. Historic Views: Older photographs in the collection of Mr. Paul Fink, Washington County Historian, Jonesboro, Tennessee.

Newer photographs in the collection of Dr. and Mrs. William E. Kennedy.
- C. Bibliography:
 1. Primary and unpublished sources: Deed Books in the Washington County Courthouse.
 2. Secondary and published sources: Historic Jonesboro, A survey of historic buildings in the town completed by the School of Architecture at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 1972.

Prepared by: William Starke Shell
Architect, Knoxville, Tennessee
January 9, 1975

Edited by: Susan McCown
Architectural Historian,
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Fall 1985